

I. ABSTRACT

This was a cross sectional descriptive study done in the MOH area Marawila to assess the knowledge and attitudes on reproductive health of the female garment factory workers. The sample consists of four hundred workers selected out of 2350 in three garment factories. A pre tested self administered questionnaire was used to collect information from the respondents.

Majority of the respondents, (66.3%) demonstrated poor knowledge on conception (scored less than 4 marks). This was also the case with regard the method of family planning, for which only 18% had good knowledge. Majority (77.2%) were aware of the different methods of contraception. Among the methods, the "pill" has been rated as the mostly heard method of contraception. This could be attributed to health education, and awareness programs conducted by the health staff. Compared with the level of knowledge of the married workers, a clear distinction was the lack of contraceptive knowledge among the unmarried workers (Statistically significant).

$$X^2_{(df=2)} = 29.84 ; P < 0.0073$$

While knowledge on STD/HIV/AIDS taken together could be rated as "fair", knowledge on HIV/AIDS taken separately, could be classified as "good" which could be due to prominence given nowadays to HIV/AIDS more than to STDs. It was found that 46% of the respondents commenting that AIDS is a curable disease. This reflects an extremely poor knowledge on this aspect, of AIDS.

The knowledge on reproductive health was associated with the marital status as well as the level of education.

The findings indicate and further reinforce the already existing myths and misbelieve in contraceptive methods, which needs effective, corrective action. The attitudes of a majority of respondents towards abortion and premarital sex, according to the study are negative. Majority of respondents have shown a marked negative attitude towards abortion, perhaps not realizing the merits of it, particularly on social grounds. Respondents' attitudes towards premarital sex are not surprising in anyway, as it reflects the community held attitudes.

Findings show that printed materials and the health staff as the prime sources of reproductive health information. Which in turn helps health care providers of whatever category, to divert their energies in the dissemination of health knowledge.